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and original, nowhere does it respond so well by the logic of form and construction to the essential rules of art as in England. This is the reason that private English architecture occupies such an important place in the history of contemporary art.

The French, dominated by the fruitful suggestions of antique art, enriched by contributions from Italy and the Renaissance, fascinated by oriental marvels, and curious concerning all past civilizations, forget to study their immediate surroundings. In their admiring contemplation of a radiant past, they

fail to observe the ceaseless changes of art consequent upon the progress of nations. They have accustomed themselves to complacently regard English art solely in the light of its execrable Greek imitations at the beginning of the present century. That is now a thing of the past, and England of to-day, after a bountiful period of neo-Gothic, which has left monuments of indisputable value on its soil, stands forth with an architecture in strict harmony with its habits,—the true exponent of English life.

PAUL SÉDILLE.

THE FIRST GREAT DIAMOND.

“Long live the King!” they shouted through many a sunny street,
With clash and crash of cymbal, with shawm and timbrel sweet;
But in a twilight chamber and in a purple sheet
Lay one man, mute as marble, whose kingship was complete.

“Long live the King, the new King!” the people thundered forth,
Proving with fickle favor how little Fame is worth —
Fame, fading as a flower fades long ere the blustering North
Hath shot one icy arrow against the Autumn swarth.

But through the festive tumult one creature crept along
Who only heard, with heart deep stirred, a low, funereal song:
Who only saw, with freezing awe, the white-robed priestly throng—
So like those ghostly candles that make death’s night more strong.

One only in the city whose heart gave birth to tears,
While to the new king’s crowning the people rushed, with cheers:
One heart which on the music sailed back the stream of years,
And saw the dead man shining peerless above his peers.

So this one heart — a woman’s — although the way was hard
For one so old and feeble, now bore her to the yard
Of the far, lonely palace where lingered priest nor bard
And with a wondrous jewel she bribed the single guard.

On through the balmy garden this woman held her way,
 And climbed the porphyry staircase to where the body lay;
 To her unchanged and unestranged by Death's or Time's decay,
 For the dead had kissed her, years ago, one royal summer day.

One royal summer day; when she and he were young and fair,
 The man had kissed her and passed along leaving the rapture rare
 Of a king's grace on a peasant's face, and though she did not dare
 In life to seek those lips again, yet Death now found her there.

For whilst with kisses of endless love she crowned his brow so white,
 Over the eyes of that peasant crone there grew an equal night;
 And the courtly throng that returned ere long reeled backward in affright
 To behold her, dead, on the dead king's bed, with her lips yet smiling bright.

How came she there? The sentry, seized, confessing showed the gem,
 While priests and courtiers stared amazed; its beauty mastered them;
 And even the new king, as he gazed, felt a passion he could not stem,
 For never had such a glory blazed on a monarch's diadem.

'Twas a jewel white as an infant's soul, yet capable of all hues;
 And larger than any rose that blows save those that are born of the dews
 Which angels weep, in paradise, for joy, when God renews
 The vanished beauty that some hard duty hath caused a soul to lose.

"But how could a woman so poor" (said the High Priest) "own such a stone,
 Unless, O King, 'tis a magical thing and she was a witch full-grown?"

"Ay, Sire" said a courtier, chiming in, "perchance 'tis the Devil's own:
 The price of her soul that she pawned to win sure way to this chamber lone."

"Doubtless," quoth the new-crowned king, "but this gem escheats to the state,
 And if Eblis himself a claim should bring I should tell him, he sued too late.
 Yet perhaps 'twere well, any evil spell of this mystery to abate,
 And with prayer and incense and incantation this room to reconsecrate."

Therefore with mystic incantation and many an incense-cloud,
 And many a pious ululation (that, echoing long and loud
 Beyond the many-pillared palace, impressed the thoughtless crowd),
 The secret priests around the dead till midnight bowed and vowed.

Then the royal corpse they laid to rest 'mid a vast vault's slow decay,
 But the woman's body to ground unblest they wisely huddled away.
 Yet ever up from her breast has bloomed a deathless flower, men say,
 And the jewel for which her soul was pawned crowns a Hindoo god to-day.

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The meaning of this history? you ask me, O Bright Eyes
 In whose pellucid mystery play fancies more than wise,
 Or dreams as weirdly shapen as clouds in summer skies,
 Or marvellous affections that words can but disguise?

You ask me for the moral laid in this rhythmic nest?
 Well, sweetheart, there be many but one may please you best:
 Love is the flower eternal on the dark, human sod,
 And Love the chief crown-jewel upon the brow of God.

HENRY WILLARD AUSTIN.

AMERICAN BOOK-ILLUSTRATION.

In view of our productions to-day in the way of book-illustration it seems almost incredible that, even as late as the first quarter of this century, the art had no real existence in this country. Peter Maverick and others were doing good steel-engraving, but the art of wood-engraving was hardly out of its infancy here. Very few illustrated books of any note were published; the vignettes and cuts that "adorned" them were, as a rule, wretchedly drawn and engraved. The right spirit in this direction once awakened, the improvement was certainly rapid enough, and it became most marked after 1840. About 1843 Felix O. C. Darley, then a young man of twenty-one, first appeared before the public, and the superiority of his drawings, even at that time, over those of his contemporaries, was apparent. He improved rapidly, and in 1847 he designed the remarkable series of outline drawings, illustrating Irving's "Rip Van Winkle," for the "Art Union."

* Cooper's novels, Irving's works, and Lossing's "Our Country," are perhaps the best

They excited admiration at home and abroad, and he was acknowledged a worthy follower of Retzsch in that branch of art. He was, at that time, as powerful a draughtsman as he ever became. Later he illustrated Judd's "Margaret" and Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" in the same manner. From that time until about 1876 he was kept busy in furnishing illustrations for books and periodicals, accomplishing an enormous amount of work.* His style soon became very mannered, but was bold and vigorous withal; the influence he exerted, and the impulse his work gave to the art of book-illustration in this country, are almost immeasurable.

The number of illustrated books now increased, and the engravings grew better. A number, not very large as yet, of more or less skillful artists, began to make illustrating a profession. Prominent among these were William Croome, and, later, Jacob A. Dallas, who turned out some excellent

known of the innumerable works that were enriched by the productions of his pencil.